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EPISCOPAL ADDRESS

1912

BY
BISHOPS
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and LEWIS

CHINA

THE greatest change in the largest nation on earth is the report which Bishop Lewis and I bring you from China. A Chinese statesman said a few years ago: "The West seems eager to awaken the East; you fear my people will never move, but be assured that when the Chinese once start they will go fast and far." Napoleon, who pondered deeply problems of the Orient, said: "When China moves she will change the face of the earth." But neither of these statesmen dreamed that China would attempt, by a single leap, to clear the chasm which separated the despotism of Chi Hwangti and Genghis Kahn from the republic of Washington and Lincoln. But China has made the leap, her feet have struck on the western side of chasm; but she is still swaying and may fall backward. We have come to a watershed in human history. Already the twentieth century may be likened to the thirteenth century, and even to the century of the Reformation. We have reached an era when a nation may be born in a day, but when a civilization may perish in its birth-pangs. There ought to be a Christian regeneration; there may be a pagan reaction. We are amazed at the unique opportunities of the new epoch; we are bewildered by un

paralleled responsibilities and dangers; we are in fear and great joy, and tremble in our mirth. With America and Europe in greater unrest than usual; with the yellow races thrilled into new life by Japan's victory over Russia; with India throbbing with national aspirations; with the rude awakening of Korea and the tremendous upheaval in China, the willing worker is well assured that the call to service is preceded by the Spirit's presence and that the vanguard of the kingdom shall not lack the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

Before discussing the general problems which confront China, let us present a resumé of the quadrennium. You will search long to find those who have worked together in more delightful fellowship than have the missionaries in China and Bishop Lewis and myself. Our fellow workers in the field have been kind enough unanimously to invite both of us to return. We have only one request to make—surely you will grant us one small favor—namely, that you will permit us to work another quadrennium side by side—in China.

Despite the war we were able to hold all the Conferences of 1911-12, although the Central China and West China Conferences met in Shanghai in January instead of at the times and places scheduled. On account of the absence of most of the Chinese pastors from the Conferences, we could not secure the statistics for 1911. Hence, we can have compared the statistics of 1910 with those of 1907 presented in our report to the last General Conference.

As medical work is the first means of gaining access to a country so slow to receive the gospel as was China originally, we begin our report with hospitals, of which we now have 23, as compared with 21 in the last report. In-patients or ward patients increased during the three years from 4,674 to 8,820, a gain of 88 per cent; while the total treatments in wards, dispensaries, and homes rose from 191,000 to 304,000, a gain of 64 per cent.

Next to hospitals, schools are the best methods of gaining access to the Chinese. Here we are glad to report an increase during the three years from 13,000 to 18,700, a gain of 42 per cent. Our plan is to organize a group of ten or twelve primary schools—half of them for boys and half for girls—around a central school. The central school has two teachers, one of whom spends most of his time in supervising the work of the other schools. We also plan to offer an increase in wages of one half a dollar a month to those teachers who pass the examination in the Normal Reading Course, and a similar increase to the teachers who take a Summer Normal Course. The students on completing the respective courses are advanced from the primary to the intermediate schools, and from the intermediate to the high schools, and from the high schools to the colleges and professional schools.

We call our primary schools day schools to distinguish them from our advanced schools which are boarding schools. Aside from the boarding feature, our schools in China are modeled after those in the United States. Indeed, we believe that at least through our day

schools we have done more than any other mission to introduce into China the American public school system.

All our schools are intensely Christian. Hymns, the catechism, and the Bible are taught to all the pupils—the teaching of the Bible continuing up to and through the college course. The overwhelming majority of our students are led to Christ through the influence of the teachers and revival services. At Peking University, after a spiritual struggle notable in the history of college revivals, 150 young men, with the honors and emoluments of official life before them, offered themselves for the evangelization of China—the largest student volunteer band in any university in the world; 160 young women from the girls' school offered their lives during the same revival for similar service.

Notable service has been rendered the new government in the crisis by graduates of our Methodist colleges at Chengtu, Foochow, Kiukiang, Nanking, and Peking; and services quite as notable by the graduates of the Christian colleges of other denominations at Canton, Hankow, Tsinan, and especially by the graduates of Saint John's College at Shanghai.

Along with the medical and educational work Christian literature is a third agency through which we strive to reach the Chinese. As you are aware, our Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, united their publishing interests in China nine years ago. Dr. W. H. Lacy is conducting our joint publishing business with such fairness as wins the unanimous support of our Southern breth-

ren, and with such ability as to more than double the volume of business of the preceding quadrennium, while at the same time he has avoided indebtedness which weighs down so many of our publishing houses on mission fields. It should be added, however, that the Methodist Episcopal Church has not yet contributed her fair share toward producing a Christian literature for China.

Turning to our evangelistic work—the last and slowest in development of all types of our work in China—the report shows 20,723 full members as compared with the 17,559 in 1907, and 13,419 probationers as compared with 12,885. Our total membership, therefore, is 34,142 as compared with 30,444, a gain of 12 per cent for the three years. In addition to our 34,142 communicants, we have 18,130 inquirers enrolled. These inquirers not only attend our services regularly, but meet in weekly classes for religious instruction. Indeed, were we to report our work as it is reported in the home land, and in all other mission fields, we should count these inquirers as members on probation, and report a total membership of 52,272. This would give us a gain over our last report of 72 per cent. But this method would show an undue gain as we did not report inquirers in 1908. Our reason for not following the method authorized by the Church and sanctioned by the New Testament is as follows: The old Chinese government was notoriously corrupt and oppressive. It threw men into prison on false charges and kept them there until they paid the last farthing; but, like all corrupt governments, the old government was also cowardly and

quailed before the intervention of a foreigner. Hence, some Chinese, despite the opposition of their families, have been eager to join the church in the hope of foreign protection. On this account practically all the Protestant Churches in China have adopted our method of admitting candidates to the Church upon probation, while we have the double list of probationers and inquirers as above described. With the reform in government enabling us to baptize freely those desiring baptism, and with the changing attitude of the people toward the Church, you may expect a more rapid growth in coming days. The two most encouraging facts bearing upon future growth are the large increase in our Sunday school scholars and in our Chinese coworkers. Our last report showed that our 250 missionaries had as pastors, local preachers, exhorters, Bible women, medical assistants, and teachers 1,653 Chinese helpers; to-day we have 2,882 Chinese coworkers, an increase of 74 per cent. You have in China a little less than 6 per cent of the Protestant missionaries. You have a right to demand of us, therefore, 6 per cent of results achieved. But through this splendid service of our Chinese fellow workers our little band of 5.7 per cent of missionaries has accomplished 14 per cent of all Protestant hospital work, 14 per cent of all Protestant educational work, and we present you 16 per cent of all Protestant communicants, and 29 per cent of all Sunday school scholars in China. Herein lies our hope of the future.

By far the most strategic acts of the quadrennium were the following: (1) Bishop Lewis's return to America to secure funds for

the crisis which was upon us in China, and especially for the enlargement of Peking University, which, on account of its intensely Christian character, its location, and its possibilities of ministering to one half of the pagan world, is characterized by Dr. J. W. Chapman as the most important educational institution in the entire mission world; (2) Professor Williams' return to America for funds for Nanking University, which for obvious reasons may become as important a center as Peking; and (3) Bishop Lewis's appointment of Rev. F. D. Gamewell Secretary of our Board of Education for China. As some of our Conferences are separated by journeys of weeks, and as some institutions within the Conferences by journeys of days, each educational plant became a law unto itself and built up its work according to the exigencies which confronted it and the men and means you sent it. Dr. Gamewell has visited each of our schools, and has proved so helpful to our teachers that he has secured their coöperation in arranging the entire educational work of our Church, so as to make the men and money you send us contribute their utmost to the advancement of the kingdom. Since our return to America the Educational Association of China, comprising representatives of all our Protestant Churches, has elected Dr. Gamewell its secretary, thus giving him large influence in shaping the educational policy of all our Protestant schools and colleges in China.

While thanking God for our specifically Methodist work, we rejoice also in all general Christian work. The eagerness of the Chinese

for at least a knowledge of Christianity is shown in the growth of Bible distribution. There were distributed last year by the Bible Societies 3,754,000 Bibles or portions thereof, and by the Tract Societies 7,756,000 tracts. In several places where the revolutionary army has been located, the supply of Scriptures has been exhausted and the Bible Societies have strained themselves to meet the new demand. Moreover, Mr. W. E. Blackstone—a consecrated layman of our Church—who with his family has given many thousand dollars to China, is spending the closing years of his life in distributing the Word of God. Representing a leading business man in America, who pays for the publications, Mr. Blackstone through the missionaries and Chinese pastors distributed last year 5,000,000 portions of the Word of God. So numerous are the calls coming to him from all parts of China that the American friend with great business foresight has ordered 20,000,000 portions of the Bible for distribution in China in 1912, and Mr. Blackstone had calls for 15,000,000 of these portions before the close of March. As the greater part of these Scriptures are unbound, and are passed from hand to hand, they can last but a short time. But if some man of God can be found able and willing to put a few million dollars into Bible distribution, with the agencies now in the field and the eagerness for the Book, the Word of God can be put into almost every home in China within the next five years. If this can be done, God's Word will exercise its supernatural and transforming power over the 400,000,000 people now emerging into a new

civilization and will help to cast that civilization in Christian molds.

Broadening our vision to the possibilities of wider coöperation between the Churches, Professors E. D. Burton and J. H. Chamberlin, of Chicago University, by their tour through India and the Far East for educational investigation greatly quickened the interest of all the missionaries in higher Christian education, and by their wisdom and experience and sympathy greatly helped us toward larger coöperation. Dr. J. F. Goucher, who visited China last year as chairman of the educational section of the Continuation Committee of Edinburgh Conference, rendered all our missions an inestimable service in the standardization and articulation of our educational work in China, and in showing our missionaries the lines of practical coöperation. Bishop and Mrs. McDowell contributed to the same results and heartened us all for our tasks through their all too brief visit to us in 1911. All these leaders who have been upon the field recognize the immensity and the urgency of the problems which are before us. They urge the utmost coöperation possible in higher education to enable Protestantism to exercise a molding influence upon the education of new China. To say that the Methodist Episcopal Church alone is equal to the educational work which one fourth of the human race is now throwing upon us in China is to speak without due appreciation of the opportunities and responsibilities which now confront us. Indeed, Protestant Christendom must not only unite all her forces for the building up of five great universities—one for each eighty million of

the population, but she must increase immediately and immensely her grants of men and money if she is to meet the crisis which confronts us.

In regard to ecclesiastical union, two policies confront us: one the policy of ecclesiastical conformity, the other the policy of spiritual freedom. The first policy demands the dissolution of all ties with the home churches and the formation of one Union Church for China. The policy of spiritual freedom demands agreement only on the fundamentals of our evangelical faith and Christian experience; it does not insist upon any single form of Church government or ritual.

Perhaps the Young Men's Christian Association is the most successful organization formed during the nineteenth century for union church work. As everyone knows, this organization so far from demanding conformity in creed and order of worship upon the part of all its members, has never interfered in the slightest degree with denominational convictions of those working in its ranks. The China Inland Mission—by far the largest single mission in China—is organized upon the basis of spiritual freedom. It permits its Baptist workers to teach and practice immersion, its Methodist missionaries to baptize children in infancy, its Anglican missionaries to have their bishop and to conduct services according to the ritual of the Church of England. Certainly a Union Church for China is possible only along the lines of like spiritual freedom.

One single Union Church for all Christians rests, in its last analysis, upon either a basis

of conformity or of nonconformity. In the former case it will be found ultimately to rest upon the philosophy of the Roman hierarchy, namely, that only one form of organization is valid and all the rest are heretical. A Union Church for China upon this basis eventually would bring us all into the Anglican fold, and upon a Roman Catholic philosophy. Protestants are too sturdy a folk, and the continuance of Protestantism is too vital to the progress of the centuries, for us to forsake our birthright and enter church union upon the basis of conformity to the demands of any hierarchy. Only Roman Catholics and High Churchmen dream of a Union Church for China upon this basis.

Another party, however, dreams of church union, not simply upon a basis of nonconformity, but of a nonconformity which all alike must accept. This proposal is as unfair to the Anglicans as the former proposal is to the independents. The advocates of this view not only carry freedom to pure individualism for themselves, but in the name of liberty they demand that all other persons abandon their conception of church order and also become individualists. This is freedom running to such an extreme as to demand nonconformity upon the part of all the rest of us, who may desire to conform to the rites of our respective Churches. This philosophy would lead us to a Union Church upon an Independent or Congregational basis. But an enforced Congregationalism is as much a violation of the principle of spiritual freedom and of the spirit of independency as an enforced Episcopal organization, or an enforced form of baptism. If either the Young Men's Christian Association

or the China Inland Mission insisted upon any single form of Church government it could not last a day.

But if the proposed Union Church for China is to admit a Baptist without demanding that he renounce immersion, surely she will welcome the ten thousand Baptists whom that Church may bring to her doors without compelling them to change their mode of baptism or their form of Church organization. If she admits an Anglican, surely she will welcome the entire Episcopal Church without demanding that the members abandon either Episcopacy or their ritual. In a word, as soon as one carries the principle underlying Church organization on a basis of spiritual freedom to its logical conclusion, he will recognize that the proposed Union Church for China can at best be simply a federation carried to a higher point of efficiency than has thus far been reached in the homeland—a federation which unites the constituent Churches not only in moral and in reform work, but in locating new missions so as to best utilize the new forces sent to China—a federation which secures such coöperation in higher education as will give us at four or five strategic points in China universities at least equal to those the government will establish, and which will thus enable us to help set the standard of higher education for the nation—a federation which eliminates waste and friction, and enables us to use every man and every dollar sent to China for the most rapid advancement of the kingdom—above all, a federation which permits each mission to maintain its fellowship with the home Church, and thus inspire that

Church with a worthy motive for sending forward men and money for the salvation of the Chinese. The original federation of Churches in America was a rope of sand, as was the confederation of the original thirteen States. But as the American government advanced from federation to federal union so the American federation of Churches is advancing—perhaps not so rapidly as we could wish—in the direction of federal union. Federal union should become the immediate goal of all the Churches in China. If one says that federal union is a contradition in terms, we point to the United States and to Great Britain. Surely what human governments have realized, Christian Churches, under the providence of God, may realize. Just as the Parliament which Great Britain has granted to Canada and Australia secures almost complete local self-government, and yet permits these peoples to remain an integral portion of the greatest empire on earth, just as our state governments insure Minnesota and Wisconsin local autonomy and yet permit them to remain an integral portion of the greatest republic on earth, so the federal union which we contemplate would permit our Churches in foreign lands a large degree of local self-control, and yet allow them to remain integral portions of a world-wide Church. May not the solution of the colored problem in the United States lie in permitting all our colored Conferences to unite in a Central Conference and to pass such legislation as their conditions may demand, provided such laws do not contravene our book of Discipline, and to have Bishops of their race and for their race while

maintaining their organic connection with us and their representation in our General Conference through federal union?

Even the strongest civil governments are surrendering some measure of independence for greater coöperation. They are forming international agreements, referring questions to the Hague Tribunal, and abiding by its decisions. So the Central Conferences which you have granted to India and to China, and which you are ready to grant to Europe and to South America, secure us local autonomy and world-wide fellowship. The whole trend of modern history is toward world-wide affiliations; and it was Christianity with its daily prayer, "Our Father which art in heaven"—Christianity with its prophecy **that** the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord—Christianity with its teaching that God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth—it was Christianity which inspired these world-wide agreements embodied in the Hague Tribunal. Professor Seeley was accustomed to say that nationalism was the key of the nineteenth century, that it explains the German Empire, Italian unity, and the triumph of the national conception in our Civil War. We dare to prophesy that the key to the twentieth century will be internationalism; and this transformation is taking place because the great nations are slowly falling under the spell of the Christ. It will be a thousand pities if at the very time when Christ's conception of a universal kingdom is beginning to capture the imagination of the world, Methodism assembled in a General Conference in which representatives of

twenty nations sit side by side should attempt to reverse the divine Providence, abandon her birthright embodied in John Wesley's motto, "The world is my parish," and begin the organization of a national Church for China, a national Church for Mexico, a national Church for Liberia, etc. Hence, we are glad to report that after full discussion of the national as over against the universal Church, the Central Conference for China, on the eloquent appeal of a Chinese statesman that the Chinese Methodists keep the cross above the flag, and maintain their seat around the family hearthstone, voted overwhelmingly against the national conception, and for the maintenance by Chinese Methodists of their birthright in Ecumenical Methodism.

We cannot close our address without attempting to lay upon the heart of Methodism the solemn duty and responsibility for the salvation of China at this crisis in her history. China presents the greatest opportunity which has confronted the Christian Church since the time of Christ. We believe that Bishop Cranston's cry, written without the slightest consultation with either of us and adopted unanimously by the Board of Bishops, for two million dollars for China for the next quadrennium in place of the one million which you sent us during the last quadrennium, was inspired of God, and that the Church will measure up to this united summons to help capture the new republic for Christ.